

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /069 W

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R 221111Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6889

INFO AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 0784

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, SF

SUBJECT: DETAINEE TO CHARGE POLICE WITH ATTEMPTED MURDER

1. FEBRUARY 5 RAND DAILY MAIL REPORTED THAT ACCORDING TO POLICE A YOUNG BLACK DETAINEE FELL FROM A FOURTH FLOOR WINDOW OF DRUGERSDORP POLICE STATION FEB 4 WHILE TRYING TO ESCAPE. DETAINEE REPORTEDLY FRACTURED HIS BACK AFTER FALLING ON A CONCRETE CANOPY ON THE FIRST FLOOR AND IS IN SERIOUS CONDITION AT LERATONG HOSPITAL, KRUGERSDORP.

2. EMBOFF MET WITH SISTER-IN-LAW OF DETAINEE AND FAMILY ATTORNEY ON FEBRUARY 12. SISTER-IN-LAW STATED THAT JOSEPH VUSIMUSI NYANTHI, 31, AN EMPLOYEE OF SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS, WAS PICKED UP BY POLICE LAST NOVEMBER IN KURGERSDORP. FAMILY HAS THEREAFTER GONE TO POLICE STATION EVERY WEDNESDAY TO BRING CLEAN CLOTHING FOR DETAINEE. FAMILY FIRST AWARE SOMETHING WRONG ON MORNING FEBRUARY 2 WHEN POLICE COULDN'T EXPLAIN WHY THEY DID NOT HAVE DETAINEE'S SOILED CLOTHING FOR EXCHANGE.

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FAMILY SUBSEQUENTLY HEARD THROUGH GRAPEVINE THAT DETAINEE WAS QUESTIONED EXTENSIVELY FEBRUARY 1 AND THAT FALL OCCURRED IN EARLY HOURS FEBRUARY 2. FAMILY RECEIVED TIP FROM HOSPITAL ORDERLY FEBRUARY 2 THAT DETAINEE WAS IN WARD 15 IN SERIOUS CONDITION. SISTER-IN-LAW WENT TO HOSPITAL SAME EVENING, SAW AND WAVED AT DETAINEE IN WARD BUT WAS PREVENTED FROM SPEAKING TO HIM BY SECURITY POLICEMAN. RELATIVES RETURNED

FEBRUARY 3 AND DIFFERENT SECURITY OFFICER ALLOWED CONVERSATION WITH DETAINEE. BECAUSE SECURITY OFFICER WAS WITHIN EARSHOT, TALK CENTERED ENTIRELY ON FAMILY AND FINANCIAL MATTERS. WHEN FAMILY RETURNED ON FEB 4, SECURITY OFFICER WAS NOT AT DESK IN WARD AND SISTER-IN-LAW WAS ABLE FOR FIRST TIME TO ASK DETAINEE ABOUT CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS FALL. DETAINEE SAID "THEY PUSHED ME OUT OF A FOURTH FLOOR WINDOW." SISTER-IN-LAW SAID ALLEGATION REPEATED WHEN HER HUSBAND ARRIVED A FEW MINUTES LATER. POLICE LATER BARRED TWO ATTEMPTED VISITS ON FEB 7 AND 8. FEB 12 MEETING WITH LAWYER WAS FIRST ATTEMPT TO SECURE LEGAL AID.

3. FAMILY AND LAWYER ARE DETERMINED TO BRING POLICE TO COURT FOR ATTEMPTED MURDER OF DETAINEE. THIS IS FIRST KNOWN INSTANCE IN WHICH A DETAINEE MANAGED TO PASS WORD TO OUTSIDE. PREPARATION FOR CASE IS STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND NEITHER PRESS NOW PUBLIC IS AWARE OF DETAINEES STATEMENT TO RELATIVES. BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MURDER, DETENTION, PRISONERS WELFARE, POLICE FORCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 22-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977PRETOR00784
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770061-0111
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770221/aaaaaslw.tel
Line Count: 79
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 66ec60c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3264638
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DETAINEE TO CHARGE POLICE WITH ATTEMPTED MURDER
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/66ec60c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009